

Appl. No. 09/761,331
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Reply to Office Action of May 15, 2003

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A composite having a length, the composite comprising:

an outer layer comprising a first polymeric material;

a core layer circumscribed by the outer layer and comprising a second polymeric material; and

an inner layer circumscribed by the core layer and comprising a third polymeric material, wherein the inner layer defines a hollow space extending along the entire length of the composite;

the composite being a coextruded composite having a non-circular cross-sectional area perpendicular to the length and the cross-sectional area having a being substantially uniform size and shape along the entire length of the composite.

Claim 2 (original): The composite of claim 1 wherein at least two of the first, second and third polymeric materials have different chemical compositions.

Claim 3 (previously amended): The composite of claim 1 wherein at least one of the first, second and third polymeric materials is a thermoplastic polymeric material.

Claim 4 (previously amended) The composite of claim 1 wherein each of the first, second and third polymeric materials is a thermoplastic polymeric material.

Claim 5 (canceled)

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Claim 6 (currently amended): The composite of claim 1 wherein the composite member has a substantially rectangular cross-section perpendicular to the length.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The composite of claim 1 ~~in the form of a member having a length,~~ wherein the core layer is circumscribed by the outer layer along substantially the entire length of the composite member and the inner layer is circumscribed by the core layer along substantially the entire length of the composite member.

Claim 8 (original): The composite of claim 1 wherein the first polymeric material is weatherable.

Claim 9 (original): The composite of claim 1 wherein the first polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic polymeric materials and combinations thereof.

Claim 10 (previously amended): The composite of claim 1 wherein the core layer includes an effective amount of a filler.

Claim 11 (original): The composite of claim 1 wherein the core layer includes a wood component in an amount effective as a filler.

Claim 12 (previously amended): The composite of claim 1 wherein the second polymeric material is a thermoplastic polymeric foam and includes a wood component in an amount effective as a filler.

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Claim 13 (previously amended): The composite of claim 1 wherein the second polymeric material is a solid thermoplastic polymeric material and includes a wood component in an amount effective as a filler.

Claim 14 (previously amended): The composite of claim 1 wherein the core layer includes a wood component in an amount effective as a filler, and the second polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic polymeric materials, and combinations thereof.

Claim 15 (previously amended) The composite of claim 1 wherein the third polymeric material is polyvinylchloride.

Claim 16 (original) The composite of claim 1 in the form of a fence component or a decking component.

Claim 17 (canceled)

Claim 18 (currently amended): A composite component having a length, the composite component comprising:

- a weatherable outer layer comprising a first polymeric material;

- a core layer circumscribed by the outer layer and comprising a wood-filled thermoplastic second polymeric material; and

- an inner layer circumscribed by the core layer and comprising a thermoplastic third polymeric material, wherein the inner layer defines a hollow space, the composite component being a fence component or a decking component;

- the composite component being a coextruded composite having

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a non-circular cross-sectional area perpendicular to the length and the cross-sectional area having a being substantially uniform size and shape along the entire length of the composite, and the a hollow space extending along the entire length of the composite.

Claim 19 (original): The component of claim 18 wherein at least two of the first, second and third polymeric materials have different chemical compositions.

Claim 20 (canceled)

Claim 21 (currently amended): The component of claim 18 ~~in the form of a member having a length, wherein~~ the core layer is circumscribed by the outer layer along substantially the entire length of the composite member and the inner layer is circumscribed by the core layer along substantially the entire length of the composite member.

Claim 22 (original): The component of claim 18 wherein the second polymeric material is a foam.

Claim 23 (original): The component of claim 18 in the form of a fence post.

Claim 24 (currently amended): The component of claim 18 ~~is~~ in the form of a fence rail.

Claim 25 (original): The component of claim 18 in the form of a decking plank.

Claim 26 (currently amended) A fencing system comprising:

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a plurality of fence posts; and

a plurality of fence rails fastened to the plurality of fence posts so as to form a fence, wherein each of said fence posts and fence rails comprises

a weatherable outer layer comprising a first polymeric material;

a core layer circumscribed by the outer layer and comprising a wood-filled thermoplastic second polymeric material; and

an inner layer circumscribed by the core layer and comprising a thermoplastic third polymeric material, wherein the inner layer defines a hollow space;

each of said fence posts and rails being a coextruded composite having a length and a ~~non-circular~~ cross-sectional area perpendicular to the length and the cross-sectional area having a being substantially uniform size and shape along the entire length, and the a hollow space extending along the entire length of the composite.

Claim 27 (original): The system of claim 26 wherein at least two of the first, second and third polymeric materials have different chemical compositions.

Claim 28 (canceled)

Claim 29 (currently amended): The system of claim 26 ~~28~~ wherein at least one of the plurality of fence posts and the plurality of fence rails have substantially rectangular cross-sections perpendicular to the lengths.

Claim 30 (previously amended): The system of claim 26 wherein the core layer is circumscribed by the outer layer along

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substantially the entire length of each of said fence posts and rails, and the inner layer is circumscribed by the core layer along substantially the entire length of each of said fence posts and rails.

Claim 31 (original): The system of claim 26 wherein the second polymeric material is a foam.

Claim 32 (withdrawn)

Claim 33 (withdrawn)

Claim 34 (previously added): The component of claim 18 wherein the first polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic polymeric materials and combinations thereof.

Claim 35 (previously added): The system of claim 26 wherein the first polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic polymeric materials and combinations thereof.

Claim 36 (previously added): The composite of claim 1 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the core layer comprises a wood-filled acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic polymeric material.

Claim 37 (previously added): The composite of claim 1 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the second polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride,

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acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic and combinations thereof.

Claim 38 (previously added): The composite of claim 37 wherein the core layer includes a wood component in an amount effective as a filler.

Claim 39 (previously added): The composite of claim 18 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the second polymeric material is acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic.

Claim 40 (previously added): The composite of claim 18 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the second polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic and combinations thereof.

Claim 41 (previously added): The composite of claim 26 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the second polymeric material is acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic.

Claim 42 (previously added) The composite of claim 26 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the second polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic and combinations thereof.